

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please replace the pending claims with the following listing of claims:

1. (Previously Presented) Apparatus for forming three dimensional shaped products from particulate sphagnum moss material comprising:

a conveyor including a belt formed of a flexible and resiliently deformable material and arranged to carry on the belt of the conveyor the particulate material and arranged to move in steps,

means for continuously delivering particulate moss material onto the conveyor for conveying to a press forming stage and a spreader for spreading the particulate material to a substantially even thickness layer on the belt of the conveyor,

a press forming stage including a cavity die member positioned beneath the belt of the conveyor and including a shaped die cavity, and a co-operating die member positioned above the belt of the conveyor and arranged to move after each step forward of the conveyor which delivers fresh particulate moss material between the die members, to press the section of the belt of the conveyor between the die members and the particulate material thereon into the cavity die member, to form a shaped product,

the belt of the conveyor having sufficient resilience to lift the press formed product from the cavity die member after each operation of the press forming stage, and the conveyor being arranged to convey the formed products away from the press forming stage.

2. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the spreader comprises one or more longitudinal spreaders each arranged to move reciprocally across the conveyor before the press forming stage and rotate about a longitudinal axis of the spreader and carrying a number of spreader fingers.

3. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the belt of the conveyor is formed from a synthetic fabric material.

4. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 3 wherein the synthetic fabric material is a woven or knitted synthetic material.

5. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 3 wherein the synthetic fabric material is a woven synthetic material.

6. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 including means after the press forming stage for collecting and recycling unused particulate.

7. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 including a subsequent packaging stage for shrink packaging each product or numbers of products together.

8. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the die members are shaped to form products having a truncated approximately conical shape.

9. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the die members are shaped to form products which are wider than they are deep in a plane between a closed base and an open top of the products.

10. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the press forming stage comprises two or more pairs of die members for forming two or more products after each step forward of the conveyor which delivers fresh particulate material to the press forming stage.

11. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the die members are interchangeable between die members shaped to form smaller products and die members shaped to form products having a dimension greater across the width of the conveyor than in the direction of movement of the conveyor for forming products which are wider than they are deep in a plane between a closed base and an open top of the products.

12. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 including a drying stage for kiln drying the particulate moss material before depositing on the conveyor for press forming into products.

13. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 12 including a rewetting stage for applying moisture to the particulate moss material to re-condition the moss material after drying but before press forming into products.

14. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 13 including a subsequent packaging stage for packaging the products.

15. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 1 including a stage arranged to apply moisture to the exterior of the products to at least partially reconstitute at least part of the exterior of the products to a natural sphagnum moss appearance, after press forming and a subsequent packaging stage for packaging the products in packaging which minimizes moisture loss from the products.

16. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 14 wherein said packaging stage is arranged to heat shrink package the products in a plastic film material.

17.-32. (Cancelled)